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BEACH ADVISORY POSTED FOR PORT CHARLOTTE BEACH WEST AND BOCA GRANDE

High levels of bacteria prompt beach advisory signs to be posted



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Port Charlotte, Fla.—As a precaution, the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County (DOH-Charlotte) is issuing a beach advisory for Port Charlotte Beach West and Boca Grande. This area should be considered a potential health risk to the bathing public.

Most recent water quality test results indicate bacterial contamination. If high concentrations of Enteric bacteria are ingested or enter through an open cut or sore, they may cause human disease or infection. The most common symptoms include rashes, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. The beach remains open, however, wading, swimming and water recreation is not recommended as long as there is an advisory in place.

Enteric bacteria such as fecal coliform and enterococci normally inhabit the intestinal tract of humans and animals, and may cause human disease, infections, or rashes. The presence of enteric bacteria is an indication of fecal pollution, which may come from storm water runoff, pets, wildlife and humans.

DOH-Charlotte participates in the Florida Healthy Beaches Monitoring Program. The Healthy Beaches Program involves the monitoring of salt or brackish water beaches. Health advisories are issued if beach waters fail to meet required water quality standards. Some bacteria are naturally present in the environment. However, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has found a link between health and water quality.

DOH-Charlotte will continue to monitor bacteria levels at these beaches, and will issue an update when the beach advisory is lifted. Residents and visitors can visit <http://charlotte.floridahealth.gov> for updates.

DOH promotes and protects the health and safety of all people in Florida through the delivery of public health services and the promotion of health care standards. For more information about DOH programs such as the Florida Healthy Beaches Program, please visit the Department of Health's website at www.FloridaHealth.gov and choose beach water quality under the Environmental Health list.

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